



**Mary Hubler**

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**State Representative**

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**January 14, 2010**

**Hubler Testimony on Assembly Bill 332 – Crossbow Hunting  
Senate Committee on Transportation, Tourism, Forestry  
and Natural Resources**

Chairperson Holperin and members of the committee:

Thank you for granting AB 332 a hearing and for the opportunity to testify.

AB 332 was passed unanimously by the Assembly in October. This bill is an extension of AB 86, an earlier bill of mine that was signed into law this fall as Wisconsin Act 48. Act 48 grants qualifying non-resident archers older than 65 the right to hunt with crossbows on the same basis as resident archers. Extending that right is a matter of fairness and common sense.

On the advice of the Department of Natural Resources, I introduced AB 332 to resolve other disparities in the way the statutes treat resident and non-resident hunters. I intend to rely on the help of the DNR, if necessary, to answer questions about the various licenses, rules and statutes involved.

Essentially, this bill will allow senior non-residents who hold the appropriate non-resident licenses to hunt turkeys, bear and small game on the same basis as senior resident license holders.

Do not be alarmed by the reference to air guns in the relating clause. It is currently legal to hunt small game with air guns under NR 10.09. The rules specify pellet guns of .17 caliber or larger. It is not, of course, legal to hunt deer, bear, turkey or elk with an air gun.

This bill will make the current air gun regulations part of statute.

That is necessary because the bill defines authorized weapons and methods for certain licenses. If we do not include air guns, the state will no longer be allowed to authorize them under administrative rule, either for residents or non-residents.

As I stated before, the earlier bill, AB 86, allows senior non-resident archers to use a crossbow. The nonresident archery hunting license only authorizes the hunting of deer and certain small game species, not including turkeys or fur-bearing animals.

Resident seniors with archery licenses can currently hunt wild turkeys and bear under 2001 Act 18. AB 133 amends Wisconsin Statute 29.164(2)(b) to allow non-resident senior archers to hunt turkeys and bear. This can only be done by statute.

The DNR authorized by rule the use of crossbows by resident seniors for hunting bear under a Class A bear license and small game under a small game hunting license. The DNR was able to do this because the statutes do not specify authorized hunting methods under these two types of licenses.

This bill places those authorizations in the statutes and includes non-resident senior archers.

I have offered this bill in the same spirit as the earlier bill, AB 86, which is now Wisconsin law.

We should not charge a premium for non-resident hunting or fishing licenses and then have a different, more limited set of rules for the non-residents. We should allow visitors from out of state the opportunity to hunt and fish on the same basis as residents, as long as they are willing to buy the appropriate licenses.

Wisconsin has a stake in promoting hunting and tourism. One way to promote hunting and tourism is to treat anglers and hunters from other states fairly.